

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

INSIDE

Steps to strengthen the communist movement in the Pacific

— PAGE 9

Defend Ukraine independence! Protest, demand Moscow get out

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Nearly six months after Russian President Vladimir Putin launched a war to snuff out Ukraine's independence and subjugate its people, Moscow's offensive has largely stalled in the face of resolute Ukrainian resistance. Despite this, the Kremlin continues to unleash murderous bombardments in an effort to advance its goals at huge cost to both Ukraine and the Russian soldiers Putin uses as cannon fodder.

Putin says Ukraine has no right to exist and is really part of Russia. But the war has demonstrated the willingness of the Ukrainian people to defend their country, despite losses, vast population displacement, and the devastation of cities and infrastructure. The economy has been cut almost in half.

Hundreds of thousands of civilian volunteers toil to supply the Ukrainian military with camouflage nets and protective vests. Some ferry ambulances or other supplies across the country from Poland or elsewhere.

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Back Warrior Met strikers! Demand \$13.3 million fine be thrown out!



Miners picket Warrior Met in Brookwood, Alabama, in 2021. NLRB ruling, huge fine "is a slap in the face to every worker who stands up to their boss," said UMWA President Cecil Roberts.

BY SUSAN LAMONT

BROOKWOOD, Ala. — In a calculated attack on workers' right to strike, the National Labor Relations Board Region 10 on Aug. 2 ordered the United Mine Workers of America to pay \$13.3 million to Brookwood-based Warrior Met Coal, where hundreds of UMWA miners have been waging a hard-fought strike battle for more than 16 months.

"This is a slap in the face not just to the workers who are fighting for better jobs at Warrior Met Coal, but to every worker who stands up to their boss any-

Raid on ex-President Trump is attack on constitutional rights

Sharp shift in political crisis of capitalist rulers



Associated Press/Terry Renna
Armed Secret Service agents during FBI raid on former President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago property in Palm Beach, Florida, Aug. 8. Raid, Democrats' witch hunt against Trump, are a threat to constitutional protections against the bosses' state, rights working people need.

BY SETH GALINSKY

In a sweeping attack on constitutional rights, the Joe Biden administration ordered a pre-dawn raid on former President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida, carried out by 30 or more

heavily armed FBI and Secret Service agents. During the nine-hour raid, they refused to allow Trump's attorneys to enter the premises and ordered the security cameras turned off, but Trump's representatives refused.

No to Democrats' assault on constitutional rights!

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Federal agents claimed they were looking for evidence that Trump had illegally stored classified documents there. But virtually all former top White House officials, including Hillary Clinton

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Join 'Militant' in fight to overturn ban in Arizona federal prison!

BY SETH GALINSKY

For more than 50 years, inmates in federal prisons have subscribed to the *Militant* with little interference by prison authorities. But in a serious threat to constitutional rights to free speech and freedom of the press, the warden at the Federal Correctional Institution in Phoenix, Arizona, has banned two issues of the socialist newsweekly.

There are currently subscribers to the *Militant* in over a dozen federal prisons. They are part of the newsweekly's nearly 200 prison subscribers at some 95 state and local institutions. A ban at the U.S. Penitentiary in Florence, Colorado, in 2014 was

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'You're on the ballot!' SWP is on in Pennsylvania

BY JANET POST

PHILADELPHIA — "You're on the ballot! And good luck!" Larry Otter, the Socialist Workers Party's lawyer in Pennsylvania, told Chris Hoeppner, the SWP candidate for U.S. Congress from the 3rd District, and the *Militant* Aug. 9.

"Despite moves by state elections officials in Harrisburg to violate the SWP's constitutional right to be on the ballot, no one filed to challenge our petitions," Osborne Hart, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate, told the press the same day. "We'll be on the ballot, campaigning vigorously all across the state and beyond, promoting a working-class program and joining in actions by the labor movement, farmers and others fighting capitalist exploitation and oppression."

In addition to Hoeppner, a freight rail worker and member of the Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers Union (SMART), and Hart, the SWP is running Candace Wagner from Pittsburgh for governor. Wagner is a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive

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Kansas vote shows Dobbs decision led to needed debate on women's rights

BY TERRY EVANS

By a significant margin in a state-wide referendum Aug. 2, voters in Kansas rejected an amendment to the state Constitution that would have made it read it "does not create or secure a right to abortion." Hundreds of thousands voted it down as a way to limit the state's lawmakers from carrying through on announced plans to strictly curtail access to abortion. Their decision keeps the door open

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— On the picket line, p. 5 —

Sequoia hospital workers forge unity, make gains in strike

Bakery Workers union in Iowa strikes Ingredion over health care

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Support Warrior Met strikers!

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ruled that Warrior Met Coal was due payment for a wide variety of costs the board claimed the union was responsible for — including hiring increased security, for buses to ferry scabs across the picket line, damage repair, as well as lost revenues from unmined coal. It also said individual scabs and management personnel were due \$30,000, mostly for damages to their vehicles while crossing the picket line.

"The company is spending millions to try to defeat us," striker Antwon McGee, who was a longwall helper before the strike started, told the *Militant* after learning about the ruling. "But it won't work. I'm going to be on that picket line until the end!"

McGee, who has worked at the mine for 17 years, spoke about union members' determination to continue the fight.

"With all the money the company has spent to defeat us, they could have given us a decent contract," said McGee.

"The company thinks if they can defeat the UMWA, they've taken a step against other unions too," he said. "It will make it harder for smaller unions at other companies to win their fights. That's why solidarity is so very important!"

"We're fighting for our worth as workers, for our dignity," he said. "This strike is a real struggle."

The latest NLRB decision came as a result of a settlement the union and company entered into in June, in response to charges made by Warrior Met about union activity on the picket line. In order to save members and families from "days of hostile questioning by company lawyers," the union signed the agreement, according

to the union. But on July 22, the NLRB sent the union the \$13.3 million bill for a detailed list of damages, more than 33 times the estimated amount NLRB lawyers had initially indicated.

"What's extremely troubling here is that the NLRB appears to have taken up the company's cause without a second thought," Roberts added. "Warrior Met Coal instigated this strike and has brutally extended it through its sustained unwillingness to reach a fair and reasonable agreement," he said. "We have no intention of paying its costs for doing so. The right to strike in America must be preserved."

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters issued a statement of solidarity with the UMWA Aug. 5, rejecting the NLRB's ruling.

16-month-long bitter strike

The strike began April 1, 2021, when some 1,100 union members walked out at Warrior Met's operations in Tuscaloosa County, which include the No. 4 and No. 7 mines, a preparation plant and central shop. Picket lines were also set up at several railroad crossings. About 900 workers remain on strike, the union reports.

According to The Associated Press, the company reported net income of \$146.2 million in the first quarter of 2022, producing metallurgical coal for steel manufacturers in Europe, South America and Africa.

In 2015 the mines' previous owner, Jim Walter Resources, filed for bankruptcy. The company's biggest creditors, hedge funds like BlackRock from New York, organized Warrior Met Coal and told miners they would only keep the mines running if they got ma-



Militant/Maggie Trove

United Mine Workers strikers and supporters rallied in April in Alabama on one-year anniversary of Warrior Met strike. The union is now fighting NLRB ruling attacking their right to strike.

ior concessions from the union, which they promised to make up later when they began making a profit.

Along with being forced to take a \$6-an-hour pay cut, miners' health care costs were increased from a \$12 co-pay to a \$1,500 deductible. The union had to negotiate a \$25 million Voluntary Employees' Beneficiary Association plan to continue retirees' health care. Extra overtime pay for Sundays and holidays was eliminated; 13 annual paid holidays were cut to three; a draconian attendance policy was instituted, along with no cap on forced overtime. The union estimates the losses to workers totaled \$1.1 billion over the five years of the contract. The union members say, "No more!"

As the strike has gone on, many union members have gotten other jobs, while maintaining their picket duty. Miners report several dozen have gotten jobs at other union mines in the area.

In October 2021, the company won a court order from a Tuscaloosa County Circuit Court judge to force a stop to all picketing or other union activity *within 300 yards* of Warrior Met Coal. The order was extended several times. Picketing was finally allowed to resume in February 2022, but with some restrictions.

In May the union reported the company had insisted a settlement won't be reached unless the UMWA agrees

that 37 union members be fired for picket line activity, which the union refuses to do.

The company has been producing coal at both struck mines, using management personnel and scabs, including some union members who have crossed the picket line.

Recently union members have been picketing only at shift change times twice a day. Now the union is stepping up its presence at mine entrances, while complying with the court's current restrictions.

While the company has been violence-baiting union members for picket line activity, local, county and state police continue to act as escorts for the scabs and refuse to take any action against Warrior Met management personnel and other scabs who on several occasions have purposely struck miners or family members peacefully picketing at the No. 7 mine entrance. Last August, the NLRB dismissed out of hand union charges about these assaults.

The union has been organizing regular solidarity rallies since shortly after the strike began. These often draw unionists from Alabama and beyond, in addition to UMWA strikers, family members and retirees. Now scheduled for every other week due to heat considerations, the next rally will be Aug. 17

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THE MILITANT

Celebrate Cuba's socialist revolution!

The attack on the Moncada barracks 69 years ago, led by Fidel Castro, opened the battle by workers and farmers in Cuba to take political power, which they did in 1959, and to carry out a socialist revolution. The 'Militant' demands Washington end its economic war against Cuba.



Militant/Mike Shur
Cuban Ambassador Yuri Gala speaking at New York Militant Labor Forum July 30.

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SWP on ballot in Pennsylvania

Continued from front page

Engineers and Trainmen.

Supporters of the SWP, unionists and others had been organizing to fight any moves to bar Hoeppner from the ballot. Four months after petitioning had begun and less than a week before the deadline, when the SWP filed its petitions in Harrisburg July 27, election officials told Hoeppner he had enough signatures to be on the ballot, but that the requirement had just been raised from 1,000 to 2,300. The party submitted 2,422 signatures, well over two times what had been required.

Hoeppner and Otter were told the change had been sent out as a "tweet." But it wasn't changed on the state's election website until July 30. And authorities never informed the SWP, but did send emails to the officially recognized "minor" parties, the Greens and Libertarians. This didn't end up helping the Libertarians, a number of whose candidates have been challenged by Republican Party forces.

"It was an outrage what the state did, because I think the democratic process should mean equal participation. It was very undemocratic for them to make it harder for ballot access. The state should make it easier to participate, not harder," Enock Charles Faustin told the *Militant* Aug. 9. Faustin hosts the program "Rights, Society, Politics" on Radio Olivier, affiliated with the Haitian congregation of Mount Olive Church of God in Orange, New Jersey.

"I think it's great that Chris and the SWP got on the ballot!" campaign supporter Reafa Carter told the *Militant*. Carter lives in Congressional District 3 and signed the petition to put Hoeppner on the ballot. "This will make it a little easier for the party that represents us ordinary people to meet and talk with more workers."

Crisis of capitalism today

In preparation for a possible fight over the right of the SWP to be on the Pennsylvania ballot, special *Militant* Labor Forums were organized Aug. 6 in Philadelphia, where Hart spoke, and in New York, featuring SWP na-

Back miners strike

Continued from page 2

at 6 p.m. at UMWA Local 2397's union hall here.

Meanwhile, UMWA locals and districts in other parts of the country, as well as many other international unions, locals, and individual workers continue to contribute to the strike fund, which pays weekly benefits to strikers. A well-organized auxiliary organized by strikers' spouses helps gather and distribute food and other donations.

Solidarity with the UMWA strikers! Come to the Aug. 17 rally in Brookwood! Send checks made out to UMWA 2021 Strike Fund to UMWA Strike Fund, P.O. Box 513, Dumfries, VA 22026. Send messages of support to UMWA District 20 at 21922 Hwy. 216, McCalla, AL 35111. Email: umwadistrict20@bellsouth.net.

'Militant' schedule

This is a two-week issue.

Militant no. 32 will be mailed out August 25.

tional campaign director John Studer.

"Pennsylvania has a long history of making it difficult for working-class candidates to get on the ballot," Studer said. "For decades the state had a 'Loyalty Oath,' that aimed at keeping candidates from the Communist Party and SWP off the ballot," Studer said. "We challenged it through our election campaign in 2006 and won."

The capitalist rulers face a deepening political crisis, he said. Both of their political parties — the Democrats and Republicans — are fracturing. Never-Trumper are fighting a rear-guard action against the former president consolidating control over the Republican Party. The democratic socialist wing of the Democrats is chafing at the constrictions they face. These parties are coming apart.

"Underneath this is the capitalist rulers' hatred and disdain for the working class," said Studer. "And they increasingly fear the working class, as it begins to rumble amid today's crisis of capitalist production and trade."

"Politics today isn't liberal vs. conservative, or left vs. right — it's class vs. class."

The *New York Times* — which functions as a house organ for the Democrats — tries to claim everything is great in the country today, hoping to boost the party's chances in the elections as President Joseph Biden's poll numbers plummet, he said. In an Aug. 6 article they hailed government reports saying 528,000 people got jobs in July, describing the economy as, "Jobs aplenty. Sizzling demand." If this is a recession, the paper says, it "is unlike any previous one."

"But even in this same article, the *Times* has to admit this isn't the real story for working people," said Studer. They said: "To most people, of course, this doesn't feel like a boom. Measures of consumer confidence are at record lows, and Americans overwhelmingly say they are dissatisfied with the economy."

"High inflation is eroding — and in some cases erasing — the benefits of a strong job market," they confess, and "hourly wages, adjusted for inflation, are falling at the fastest pace in decades."

In fact, Studer said, the most important figures on jobs — the labor force participation rate — are going down. There are 623,000 fewer work-



Chris Hoeppner, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in Pennsylvania's 3rd District, left, turns in nominating petitions July 27. Party prepared for fight after state official changed requirements. "You're on the ballot! And good luck!" SWP attorney Larry Otter, right, told Hoeppner Aug. 9.

ers in the workforce today since the beginning of the pandemic. And more retired workers are unretiring, unable to keep up with rising prices.

We need own party, a labor party

Many big political questions today revolve around the place of the Constitution, Studer said, including on Supreme Court decisions like *Roe v. Wade*, freedom to worship, the right to bear arms, as well as the White House's spiraling use of executive orders, not legislation, to try and impose its way.

Liberals insist the Supreme Court is increasingly reactionary, and big changes are needed, both to the court and to the Constitution.

Times columnist Jamelle Bouie, for example, proposes to get rid of the U.S. Senate, or to turn it into a purely ceremonial body, like the House of Lords in the U.K.; make the House of Representatives the decision-making body, increasing its size to "at least 600 members," hoping for a decisive Democratic majority to control all legislation; and take decisive steps to "discipline a rogue Supreme Court."

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez wants a new law that will bar the Supreme Court from making any decisions that effect "abortion, marriage equality, non-procreative intimacy, and contraception."

"We are supporters of the Constitution, as written and strengthened by dozens of amendments, many the result of pressure from the working

masses; the federal system in the U.S., with three chambers of government and checks and balances put in place by the young coalition of merchants, slave owners and farmers on the backs of the American Revolution," said Studer. "Of course it's a bourgeois Constitution and government, but it provides space and powerful rights against government attack that are good for the working class and our struggles."

"We find a lot of receptivity to the party's political program," SWP Senate candidate Hart said at the Philadelphia forum, "and for the need for the working class to form its own party, a labor party, to join with farmers and our other allies to fight to take political power into our own hands."

Brian Williams in New York contributed to this article.

French translation of 'Militant' article on 2022 International Active Workers Conference online

The French language translation of the *Militant* feature article reporting on the 2022 International Active Workers Conference hosted by the Socialist Workers Party — Apporter aux travailleurs le programme du Parti socialiste des travailleurs: *Conférence pour discuter la réponse de la classe ouvrière aux crises capitalistes et convoquer un congrès du parti* — is now posted at www.themilitant.com, the paper's website, under "Articles en Français" for June.

www.themilitant.com

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Monday, September 4, 2006

The End of the Loyalty Oath

Taking a stand, forcing a change

Editorial

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Cynics who believe that an individual can't make a difference in politics should consider the example of John Staggs. Staggs, 59, is a meatpacker from northwest Philadelphia who is running for a state House seat on the Socialist Workers Party ticket. To put it politely, any Socialist Workers Party candidate would be facing long odds in November. But even before the first vote is cast, Staggs already has had an impact on Pennsylvania.

When Staggs turned in his nominating petitions this year, he refused to sign the state's loyalty oath. He also threatened to sue the state to stop enforcing the McCarthy-era law, which required candidates for public office to pledge in writing that they were not "subversive." Incredibly, several other states still insist that candidates sign this promise to be good boys and girls.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1974 that Indiana's loyalty oath was unconstitutional because it violated free speech.

Pennsylvania had done away with its oath for state employees in 1975, but still required political candidates to sign the pledge.

What's the problem? Well, it's an ancient truth that one man's "subversive" is another man's "courageous reformer." You don't let the people in power decide which candidates they will allow to challenge them.

Faced with Staggs' resistance, state Attorney General Tom Corbett wisely

decided to order elections officials to stop enforcing this law. The Department of State intends to change the candidacy forms. Make sure you do that, folks.

Countless candidates over the decades have signed this noxious and



Above, 2006 *Philadelphia Inquirer* celebrating victory for political rights when SWP campaign of John Staggs for state representative won fight overturning Loyalty Oath in Pennsylvania. Pictured left to right: Staggs; Eric Lieberman of constitutional rights law firm Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky and Lieberman; and Osborne Hart, then SWP candidate for Pennsylvania governor, during fight by the campaign.

Attacks on constitutional rights

Continued from front page

ton in 2016, have been in disputes over what they can and cannot keep. In fact, the FBI, with Trump's permission, had already gone through many of the same files at Mar-a-Lago they confiscated during the raid.

Though the warrant the agents produced only mentioned the records, they searched all throughout the 3,000-square-foot home. This included rummaging through Melania Trump's wardrobe and the former president's personal dressers. Agents broke into his safe.

The reverberations of this brazen attack on constitutional rights will be felt widely for years in crisis-wracked U.S. politics today.

There's a long history of politically motivated police raids against the Socialist Workers Party, Communist Party and many others over decades, including, the raid and murder of Black Panther Party leader Fred Hampton.

Dangerous trend against rights

The Aug. 8 FBI raid follows on a dangerous trend carried out over the last several years of investigations, indictments and home invasions that often try to smear their targets with spurious charges of acting as "foreign agents." This includes the baseless charge that Trump is a pawn of Moscow that has been pushed by the Democrats, FBI officials, the liberal press and others ever since 2015.

The Democrats' campaign against Trump is aimed at either railroading him to prison or preventing him running for president or any other office ever again.

Beginning in 2015, growing numbers of Democratic Party backers, the liberal press, like-minded FBI officials and others began fabricating charges to smear and damage Trump. The Clinton campaign paid for the so-called Steele dossier, a hash of false and lurid charges that the presidential candidate was a pawn of Moscow. This morphed into probes and impeachment efforts run by former FBI heads James Comey and Robert Mueller.

This concerted drive spawned an endless series of early-morning raids against those associated with him. On July 26, 2017, FBI agents raided the home of Paul Manafort, Trump's former campaign chairman, carting off boxes of documents, including many already provided to Congress for its witch hunt against the White House.

On June 22 of this year, federal cops raided the home of former Justice Department official Jeffrey Clark, marching him out of his house in pajamas af-

ter refusing to allow him to put on pants, allegedly looking into Trump's role in the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the Capitol. They confiscated all his electronic devices.

Other FBI raids

Middle-of-the-night armed FBI raids were also carried out on two Black organizations and their leaders July 29.

These raids grew out of a Florida grand jury indictment filed July 26 that indicted Moscow resident Aleksandr Viktorovich Ionov on charges of conspiring to act as an unregistered agent of the Russian Federation. Ionov had organized a "Dialogue of Nations" conference in Moscow in 2015 that was attended by political groups from around the world, including members of the African People's Socialist Party and other groups from the U.S.

Three days after the indictment, FBI agents raided the offices of Black political groups Uhuru and the African People's Socialist Party in St. Petersburg, Florida, and St. Louis. The FBI broke down doors, set off flash-bang grenades, and temporarily detained leaders of the groups at gun point. Snipers with laser scopes aimed at African People's Socialist Party's leader Omali Yeshitela while FBI agents searched their homes and offices, confiscating computers, cellphones and financial records.

"We can have relationships with whoever we want to," Aliké Anai of the Uhuru Movement told the press, adding that the group never made a secret of its backing of Moscow's war against Ukraine.

This is a clear example of government moves to victimize people simply because of their views and political activities.

On Aug. 1, U.S. Senator Marco Rubio from Florida publicly demanded the FBI investigate and charge Puentes de Amor (Bridges of Love), an organization that opposes Washington's economic war on Cuba, and its organizer, Seattle school teacher Carlos Lazo, for "acting as unregistered foreign agents of the Cuban regime."

His "evidence"? The group has been part of organizing "political demonstrations" calling for lifting the embargo, and Lazo has met with Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel!

Rubio's demand for Lazo and Puentes de Amor to be branded and moni-

Opponents of US embargo on Cuba counter rightist provocations



Militant/Rachele Fruit

Car caravans and other actions took place across the country July 31 to demand an end to the decadeslong U.S. economic war against Cuba. In both Miami and New York, rightist provocateurs attempted to disrupt the protests. Organized by Bridges of Love, led by Seattle teacher Carlos Lazo, and other groups, some 70 people in 30 cars joined the caravan in Miami. As protesters gathered to begin the caravan, above, a crowd of an equal number of opponents of the Cuban Revolution gathered across the street. They shouted vulgar threats against protesters and burned a July 26 flag, the flag of the Cuban combatants who led the workers and farmers revolution to victory in 1959.

Despite these threats, the caravan set out, winning support along the route, leading to a successful rally at the airport. Among those participating were a dozen people who had just returned from trips to Cuba sponsored by IFCO/Pastors for Peace and the Venceremos Brigade.

The New York-New Jersey Cuba Sí coalition held its monthly action protesting Washington's embargo against Cuba at the José Martí statue in Central Park. Some 50 people attended. Opponents of the revolution called an "anti-communist counterprotest" at the same place and time, and eight or nine showed up. The rightists shouted provocative epithets, and one rushed into the anti-embargo action, slapped and shoved some demonstrators and ripped a couple of their signs. Participants in the Cuba Sí action held their line, prevented further provocations and successfully concluded their action.

— RACHELE FRUIT AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

tored as Cuban government agents is utterly spurious. While so far there is no indication that the FBI plans to take up Rubio's demand, his call for a witch hunt is a dangerous threat.

Rubio has been demanding Washington take more drastic measures against the Cuban Revolution and its defenders in the U.S. for years, with disdain for constitutional rights.

Puentes de Amor founder Lazo said Aug. 4 that Rubio's allegations "have one purpose: to silence the voices of the Cuban American community in southern Florida who want better relations between Cuba and the United States." As part of responding to the slander, Lazo called on opponents of the U.S. embargo to turn out for an Aug. 28 anti-embargo caravan in Miami. These

monthly caravans have attracted many Cuban Americans, among others.

These charges — and FBI raids that could have led to physical harm or murder — are reminiscent of witch hunt tactics used by the government for many decades. They are a gross violation of constitutional rights.

The unprecedented raid against a former U.S. president strengthens the hand of the government in its frame-ups and attacks on the labor, communist, Black rights and other popular movements.

The move against Trump opens a new stage in the attack by the Democrats, backed by the Justice Department and FBI, on constitutional rights won in struggle. It is in the interests of the labor movement and all working people to protest this attack.

Central Park jogger case frame-up victim finally cleared

BY JANET POST

NEW YORK — More than 30 years after he was convicted, Steven Lopez, the sixth co-defendant in a 1989 frame-up trial of five youth, who became known as the Central Park Five, was exonerated July 25 in the New York State Supreme Court. He had been convicted on related robbery and assault charges.

The five others, Antron McCray, Kevin Richardson, Yusef Salaam, Raymond Santana and Korey Wise, were framed for the 1989 assault and rape of Trisha Meili, a 28-year-old Caucasian investment banker, while she was jogging in the park. Friends and family of the five organized demonstrations in their defense and their convictions were eventually overturned in 2002.

The Black and Latino teenagers were 14 to 16 years old at the time of their arrests and only "confessed" after cops made physical threats against them.

They were held for 14 to 30 hours without food or sleep. Detectives led defendants to blame each other, promising they would be allowed to go home.

Some of the beleaguered youth fingered Lopez as the assailant, later disavowing this testimony. One said he only named Lopez after being given his name by a detective. "I was 15 years old and I wanted to get out of there," he said.

The night of the rape, Lopez, who was also 15, was detained in a holding cell for 20 hours before being questioned. His parents spoke almost no English and translation was not provided. A detective wrote out a statement that Lopez and his father signed, but Lopez always claimed his innocence.

That same night, Lopez was then accused of robbing and beating John Loughlin, a teacher jogging in Central Park. But there was no physical evidence; Loughlin never identified Lopez

as one of the attackers; and statements by witnesses blaming Lopez were retracted.

A month before his trial for the Meili rape, Lopez made a plea deal claiming he was "guilty" of the first-degree robbery of Loughlin in exchange for having the rape charge — carrying a much harsher sentence — dropped. Lopez was sentenced in 1991 and served almost four years in prison.

In an interview with the *New York Times* after Lopez's exoneration, Yusef Salaam and Raymond Santana voiced their support for him. "It's only right that he's exonerated," said Santana.

The Central Park Five served between 6 and 13 years in prison amid a hysterical atmosphere whipped up by capitalist politicians and the media, claiming they were involved in a rampage of some 25 youth harassing and molesting joggers and pedestrians. Democratic Mayor

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50 Years of Covert Operations in the US

Washington's Political Police and the American Working Class

The 15-year political campaign of the Socialist Workers Party to expose decades of spying and disruption by the FBI and other opponents of government policies.

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—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Sequoia hospital workers forge unity, make gains in strike

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. — After almost two weeks on the picket line, 300 striking workers at Sequoia Hospital here are back at work after pushing back an insulting contract offer from Dignity Health bosses. Strikers included nurses' assistants, surgical technicians, respiratory therapists, housekeepers and cooks, all members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees union Local 829. Dignity is the fifth largest U.S. hospital chain.

The new contract includes a 16% raise over four years and a 2% signing bonus, well above the bosses' original offer. A provision that would have allowed the hospital to raise employee insurance premiums at a moment's notice was defeated. The hospital also agreed to hire more certified nursing assistants, one of the strikers' key demands.

Housekeeper Norma Godoy, a regular on the picket line, told the *Militant*, "It won't keep up with inflation, but by being out there we won more."

Workers said the company's threat to cut off health insurance if they didn't return to work before August was a factor in their decision to end the strike. Of the 185 who voted July 29, 100% voted yes.

"We had a good turnout on the picket line," housekeeper Vicky Harper said. "We got a lot of support from nurses, engineers and other hospital employees."

Ana Muir, a record-keeper, said that when she worked at the hospital in the 1980s nursing assistants usually cared for about six patients at a time. Now it can be up to 20. Night nursing assistants have had as many as 30 patients.

"This is unsafe for us as well as the patients," Joe Paloma, a certified nursing assistant, told the *Militant* on the picket line July 17. He said it was the first time they've ever been on strike.

— *Betsey Stone*

Santa Monica nurses picket, demand safe staffing

SANTA MONICA, Calif. — Over 60 nurses and supporters held an informational picket outside Providence Saint John's Health Center here Aug. 1. The

registered nurses, members of the California Nurses Association, are in contract negotiations with hospital bosses.

The nurses' central demand is for higher and safer staffing levels. A poster at the picket showed a list of 181 unfilled job postings, as well as 126 positions filled by "travelers," temporary nurses hired by the hospital.

Nurses on the picket line described heavy overtime, increased patient loads and shortages of supplies. Many nurses are quitting, making conditions worse.

"Saint John's needs to recruit and retain nurses. Because of inferior pay and conditions compared to other hospitals, many leave for UCLA or Cedars-Sinai soon after they are trained," Lizabeth Wade, a member of the union bargaining team, told the *Militant*. "Because of staffing shortages, management is using new nurses to be in charge in the ICU, which is dangerous."

Sam Morris, a nurse in the Interventional Radiology Department, said, "The hospital has ambulatory surgery nurses float into the main operating room where they don't have experience. It's dangerous for us and the patients."

"The hospital administration is more concerned with staffing areas where they generate the most revenue," he said. "Understaffing makes everyone suffer."

— *Bill Arth*

Bakery Workers union in Iowa strikes Ingredion over health care

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa — Some 200 members of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 100G and supporters picketed and rallied here Aug. 5, the fifth day of their strike against Ingredion bosses.

"The company's offer increases workers' health care premium more than the wage increase they propose. They want to eliminate five union jobs in the lab department. They also want to eliminate time and a half for more than eight hours," Local President Mike Moore told this *Militant* worker-correspondent.

Ingredion makes sweeteners, starches, nutrition ingredients and biomaterials used in products from foods and beverages to paper and pharmaceuticals. It



Militant/Dan Fein

Striking BCTGM Local 100G members at Ingredion in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, picket plant Aug. 5, prepare to lead march against boss moves to cut jobs, health care, overtime pay after 8 hours.

employs 12,000 workers worldwide.

Chris Eby with 30 years seniority said, "We have 122 union members. One-hundred percent voted against the company's proposals at our union meeting and 96% voted to strike."

Several local unions sent delegations to the expanded picket, including the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; Teamsters; International Association of Machinists; Retail, Warehouse and Department Store Union; United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners; and SMART rail union.

A number of strikers said the bosses are bringing in busloads of scabs to the plant every day.

"The company's offer included us having to work 14 days straight, and 12-hour days," striker Delmar Jellison said. "This would destroy family life. Parents wouldn't be able to raise their kids."

Striker Chad Watson has eight months seniority. "Those like me who were hired after 2014 are paid less than those hired before — \$4.50 less," he said. "This two-tier setup divides us."

Speakers at the rally included Moore, who denounced the 12-hour day proposal; Rick Moyle from the Hawkeye Labor Council; Jesse Case from the Teamsters; and Peter Hird, secretary-treasurer of the Iowa state AFL-CIO.

Contributions and messages of sup-

port can be sent to BCTGM Local 100G, 500 J St. SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404.

— *Dan Fein*

Locked-out in Quebec, aircraft workers rally against Rolls-Royce

MONTREAL — Two hundred Rolls-Royce Canada workers, who repair and overhaul aircraft engines, and their supporters marched and rallied at Quebec Premier Francois Legault's office here Aug. 3 to protest the Quebec government giving millions of dollars in handouts to Rolls-Royce bosses, while the workers have been locked out since March 15. They are members of a Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN) affiliate.

The workers had voted down a second company offer by 75% July 24. The bosses have been fighting to raise their profits on the backs of the workers, while aiming to weaken or even break the local union.

The company insists on ending the workers' defined benefit pension plan and replacing it with an inferior defined contribution plan. The unionists are fighting to maintain their plan and to include all those hired since 2013, who are currently excluded, and for everyone to receive health benefits at retirement.

The workers are also demanding wage increases to help meet rising inflation, as well as cost-of-living increments in the final four years of the five-year contract. "Rolls-Royce Canada is benefiting handsomely from government subsidies, and we're the ones paying for that," CSN Vice President Francois Enault said to cheers and applause. "We have to stand up to this union-busting."

In February the Quebec government announced a handout to the Quebec aerospace industry of 334 million Canadian dollars (\$260 million) through 2024, including Rolls-Royce. In 2011 the company received CA\$30 million.

The bosses locked out the workers while they were voting by 94% to strike. In addition to firing union President Frederic Labelle, the bosses are suing a quarter of the workers, accusing them of violating a court injunction limiting picketing. They also announced the permanent layoff of 30 workers.

"We are thinking about the future generations and not just ourselves, but the younger workers," Tim Balleine, with 25 years on the job, told the *Militant*. "That's what a union is all about, solidarity. We want to go back united."

Send solidarity messages to nego@csn-rrc.ca and donations to: <https://www.csn.qc.ca/solidarite/rolls-royce>.

— *Lynda Little and John Steele*

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N. Y. MEMPHIS, PHILADELPHIA, CHICAGO

August 25, 1997

HAVANA — Tens of thousands of young people filled the Panamerican stadium here August 5 for the closing ceremony of the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students. Among them were most of the 12,335 delegates from 132 countries who participated in the international youth gathering.

The final declaration of the festival called on young people to support all struggles against colonialism, demand the cancellation of the foreign debt of third world countries, and campaign "for the lifting of the U.S. blockade against Cuba."

The largest participation outside the Cuban delegation came from the United States followed by Argentina and Mexico. Sizable delegations came from most countries in Western Europe. Participation was lighter from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Republics. Among the largest delegations from the African continent was South Africa.

August 11, 1972

At 8:15 a.m. on Aug. 6, 1945, the United States ushered in the age of atomic power by dropping the first atomic bomb on the 344,000 people of Hiroshima. According to the Japanese government, the bomb killed approximately a quarter-million people.

Three days after the destruction of Hiroshima, the U.S. dropped the second bomb. This time Nagasaki was hit. "Results were good," said the general in charge. Seventy-three thousand died. U.S. officials were well aware that Japan's surrender was at most a matter of months away, regardless of any invasion.

The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki represented the opening salvo of the cold war. Today, 27 years after the bombing, U.S. imperialism is adding untold thousands of Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians to the list of those who have died as a result of its drive to dominate Asia.

THE MILITANT

Official Weekly Organ of the Socialist Workers Party

August 25, 1947

CLINTON, Mich. — This town of 1,200 people was awakened Aug. 13 by the battle between capital and labor. The powerful might of United Automobile Workers fell with telling weight on the strikebreaking attempts of the Clinton Machine Company.

About 1,000 union flying squadron members and pickets from Detroit and Toledo rushed to the aid of Clinton strikers after the company president mobilized a mob of strikebreakers last Monday and violently smashed through a picket line. Today's mass demonstration of labor solidarity by experienced militants stopped dead the attempted herding of scabs into the plant.

The 900 strikers are battling for a 15-cent hourly raise and contract protection against the Taft-Hartley Slave Labor Law. The union men held the picket line firm against the attempts of company stooges to break through by violence.

Gibson's Bakery fights to stay open as Oberlin College stalls

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

On Aug. 9 the Supreme Court of Ohio granted Oberlin College a stay from having to pay damages long owed the Gibson family until the court can review a pending appeal filed by the school.

Attorneys for the Gibson family filed an urgent request July 26 with Lorain County Court Judge John Miraldi, asking that millions in damages, attorney's fees, and interest be paid to them immediately.

The judge presided over a six-week jury trial in 2019 that found Oberlin College and Dean of Students Meredith Raimondo guilty of a race-baiting slander campaign against the family and their store, Gibson's Bakery. The jury awarded \$44 million in damages to the Gibsons. The judge later reduced damages to \$20 million based on a state law that limits such awards.

Lee Plakas, an attorney for the Gibsons, explained in the request that the 137-year-old, fifth-generation family business may not survive the continuing consequences of Oberlin's malicious conduct. "Unless there is a substantial change in circumstances," Plakas said, "the bakery may only survive for the next couple of months." With attorney's fees and interest accruing at more than \$4,331 per day since 2019, the Gibsons are owed more than \$36 million.

Ohio's Ninth District Court of Appeals heard Oberlin College's appeal and unanimously upheld the jury's verdict on March 31 and ordered the Lorain County Court "to carry this judgment into execution." Yet months later not a single cent has been turned over to the Gibson family.

Race-baiting, moves to break family

In 2016, an Oberlin College student who is Black was caught shoplifting and arrested with two friends at Gibson's Bakery. The next day hundreds of students and college administrators, including Raimondo, protested outside the bakery. Raimondo passed out flyers accusing the Gibsons of racism and racial profiling. The dean provided students with food, gloves, and use of college copiers. She instructed the college's catering vendor to cancel Gibson's longstanding contract to supply baked goods to the campus, an instruction that still stands today.

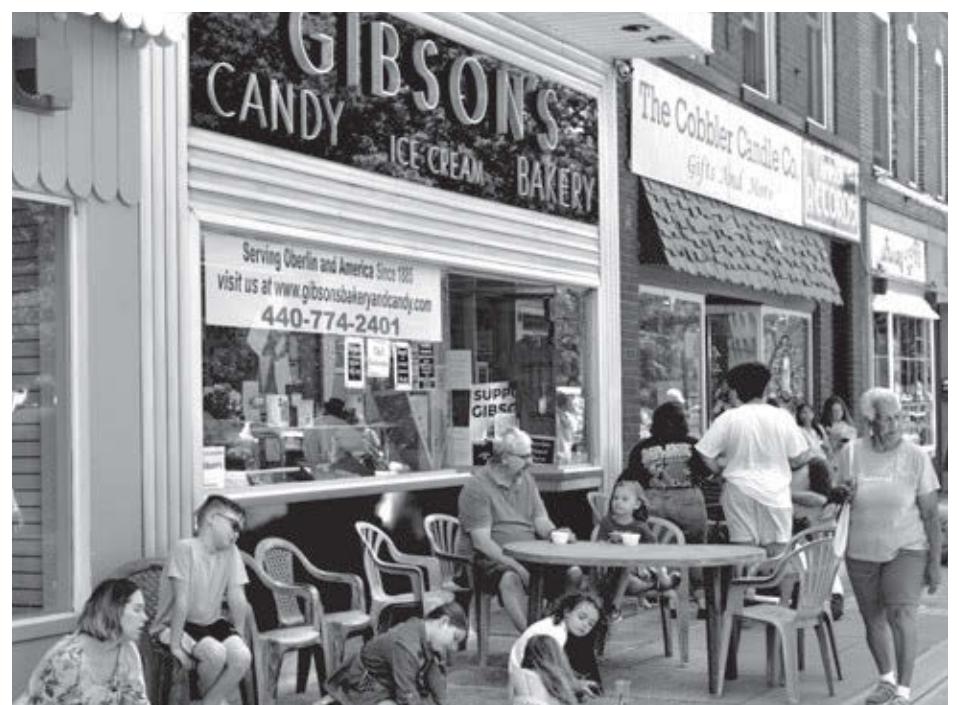
College administrators demanded special treatment for their students,

telling the Gibsons to drop criminal shoplifting charges against the three students and insisting that the school be called instead of the police when their students — who pay \$70,000 for tuition and room and board annually — are caught shoplifting.

When the Gibsons took the school to court for slander and damage to their business, the school hunted high and low but couldn't come up with a single person to testify that the Gibsons had a history of racial profiling or discrimination. Former college President Marvin Krislov testified at the 2019 trial that during his 10-year tenure no one had ever suggested that the Gibsons were racists.

Instead of accepting the jury's verdict, current Oberlin College President Carmen Twillie Ambar vowed at the end of the trial the appeals would become a "lengthy and complex process." The ongoing financial pressure is aimed at crushing the family. The school has more than \$1 billion in assets and one of the most prestigious art collections of any college in the U.S.

In their appeal to the state Supreme Court, Oberlin's attorneys argue First Amendment rights of free speech are at issue. They have enlisted an armada of support from media, professional associations, and civil rights groups, including the NAACP, which submitted a friend of the court brief recalling the role of student activism during the Civil



Gibson's Bakery, a 137-year-old family business, fights to keep open as Oberlin College uses its vast resources to fight court ruling, still paying \$36 million owed for race-baiting slanders.

Rights Movement and the importance of First Amendment free speech rights.

But the narrative pedaled by the college's attorneys and echoed in the friend of the court briefs has nothing to do with the trial record, the students or the right of free speech. The Gibson lawsuit did not sue the students, but was filed against Oberlin College and former Dean Meredith Raimondo for their intentional interference with the Gibsons' business and for libel. The appeals court found the "free speech" argument utterly unpersuasive.

The state Supreme Court is not required to hear Oberlin's case. In filing their appeal, Oberlin College's attorneys failed to meet a deadline to request a stay or hold on having to pay

the Gibsons pending the appeal. Belatedly realizing their error, they asked the court for relief, which was granted despite objections from lawyers for the Gibson family.

Historically, Ohio's Supreme Court has agreed to hear only about 10% of the appeals filed with it. The Gibsons have appealed as well, asking for reinstatement of the full damages awarded by the jury, noting that the reduced judgment amounts to less than 3% of Oberlin College's net worth. "Minimizing the jury's punitive damages award is unconstitutional as applied to this case," attorneys for the Gibsons said in their appeal, "where Oberlin intentionally and viciously annihilated the Gibsons' reputations and livelihoods."

Drought, capitalist crisis hit Texas ranchers hard

BY JOSEFINA OTERO

FAIRFIELD, Texas — Steers crowd under trees in parched brown pasture and mileslong lines of ranchers queue at the auction house here to sell off cattle they can no longer afford to feed. Texas faces the worst drought since 2011. Multiple 100-degree days are evaporating stock tanks and drying out the grass and hay that animals feed on.

Similar conditions exist in western Oklahoma and Kansas.

"Ranchers are being forced to cull herds, including heifers and their prime stock," rancher Nathaniel Turner told this worker-correspondent and Socialist Workers Party member Dennis Richter when we visited him at a restaurant where he also works part-time here in Freestone County July 25. Turner has a herd of 100 cattle and has to work two jobs to survive.

"Ordinarily you sell off the older cattle each year, but now a rancher may not be able to afford to feed his herd," he said. "The price of hay has doubled. We are forced to sell cattle at sale barns where packing companies dominate and set the price. Already 14% more cows have been killed nationally" than is usual at this time of the year, he said. "The sell-off will mean fewer calves in the spring. Prices will go up."

"The SWP presents a fighting program to offer solutions to the crisis facing workers and farmers," Richter said. "For instance, workers need cost-of-living adjustments in every contract, so when prices rise our wages go up to match. And the party demands the government guarantee farmers and ranchers the means to cover their costs of production, including their living expenses."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency has a program called Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish. It is supposed to help farmers and ranchers with some of the extraordinary costs they face, including transportation of water to livestock and expenses above normal costs of mileage for transporting feed to livestock. "All these programs would be good and are needed now," Turner said, "but ranchers know the bureaucracy and difficulty in filing for any assistance from the USDA. In many cases the assistance comes too late."

At the end of the visit, Turner said he looked forward to continuing the discussion. He renewed his subscription to the *Militant* and got two books, *The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People and Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity: The Long View of History*.

Ranchers hit by soaring prices

Rancher Ron Hollingsworth met Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Texas governor, at a feed store in Corsicana, Navarro County, July 30. Hollingsworth is 75 years old and owns 100 acres in nearby Barry that was bought by his family four generations ago, right after the Civil War. He leases another 600 acres.

"I have 100 head of Angus cattle," Hollingsworth told Kennedy. "The cost of fertilizer has tripled and the ranch feed mixture I buy has gone up from \$19 for two bags to \$26. Due to the drought, I didn't get a second cut of hay this year to feed the cattle."

"A year ago, diesel fuel was \$2.30

a gallon, and now it's \$5.50 and up," he said. "We haven't had any real rain since July 2021. If it doesn't rain until October, I will have to cull my herd."

Hollingsworth described the disastrous effects of the rising costs of land. "When I was a kid, land in this area cost \$75 an acre. Today it is \$1,500 to \$3,500 an acre. There are two investors who have bought up a lot of land. I despise what they have done to Navarro County. They break it up in 10- to 20-acre lots."

"Land should not be a commodity to be bought and sold to the highest bidder," Kennedy said. "It should be nationalized and turned over to the ranchers and farmers who use it for productive purposes."

If land were nationalized, Hollingsworth asked, "Can I pass it down to future generations?"

"Yes, of course, as long as they keep farming," Kennedy responded, "but land will no longer be bought and sold for profit."

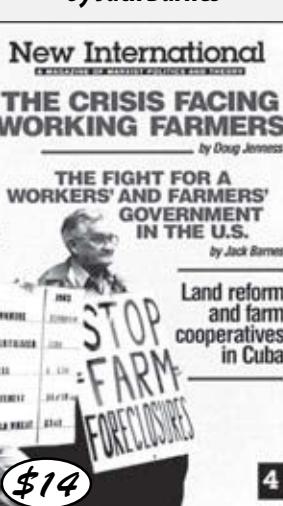
Both Hollingsworth and Turner told the SWP members about the severe drought that hit Texas between 1950 and 1957. In one decade, nearly 100,000 farms and ranches went under. The state's rural population plummeted as people moved to the city to find jobs.

"Immediate and massive federal assistance is needed to assure that no rancher or farmer is driven from the land by a drought or by the workings of the capitalist market system," Kennedy said.

Hollingsworth liked what he saw in the *Militant* and got an introductory subscription. He encouraged Kennedy to return, talk more, and visit his ranch.

New International no. 4

Includes "The Fight for a Workers and Farmers Government" by Jack Barnes



pathfinderpress.com

Kansas debate on women's rights

Continued from front page
for further discussion and debate by working people.

The outcome of the vote strongly confirms that the U.S. Supreme Court's Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization ruling in June — which held the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision unconstitutional — opens the door to serious, state-by-state debate over what best meets the needs of women today. The Kansas vote also gives the lie to the argument by liberals that the Dobbs ruling made abortion illegal.

Because of the deepening crisis of the capitalist system, working people today face mounting challenges to be able to start a family or hold one together, with real wages plunging under the impact of soaring prices for housing, child care, health care, food, fuel and other necessities. These conditions hit women workers the hardest.

The Kansas Department of Labor says that average real wages in the state fell by 1.8% last year, a figure that gives an indication, but doesn't reveal the real depth, of the drop faced by workers.

Sky-high house prices and rising rents in Johnson County, Kansas, mean more workers and youth there are sharing accommodation. Just under half of all renters pay more than 30% of their income to the landlord. As demand for housing has risen, the Shawnee City Council adopted a not-in-my-backyard ordinance in May, banning more than three people who

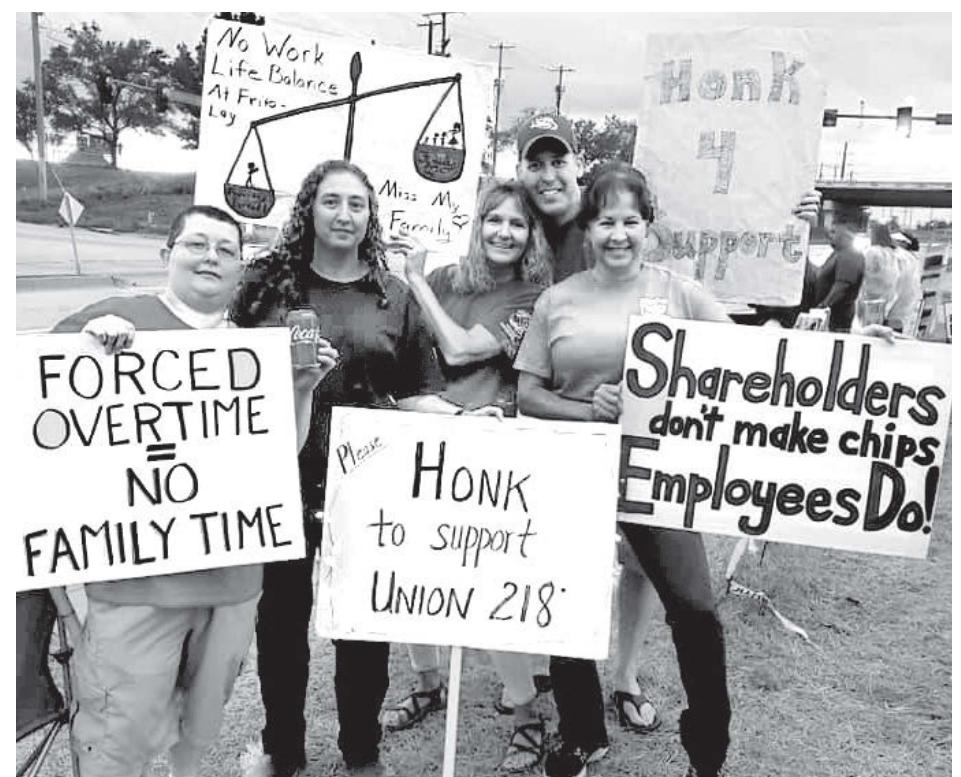
are unrelated from living in the same house.

The cost of infant care is "close to 30% of the median woman's income in the state," Donna Ginther, director of the Institute for Policy and Social Research at Kansas University, told the *Kansas Reflector*. Even for those who can afford child care, access to it is plunging, with 21 of the state's 105 counties having no open slots for toddlers or infants last year. Thirty-five percent of households headed by a single mother in the state live in poverty.

Across the country more working people are looking for ways to use their unions to fight these attacks and defend ourselves. Some 800 workers at Frito-Lay in Topeka, Kansas, struck last summer. Members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union won gains in their fight for better pay and against "suicide shifts" that were tearing family life apart.

Alongside the squeeze on living standards, working people confront a broader social crisis. Kansas was the state with the second highest percentage rise in drug overdose deaths last year. Nationwide, fatalities rose to an all-time record, going up by 15%, while in Kansas it was 43%. The sharpest increases have been in small towns and rural counties.

Voter turnout in the Kansas referendum, held at the same time as the midterm primaries, was more than double that of 2018. Over 900,000 people, nearly half of all voters, cast



Topeka Frito-Lay Union Members Appreciation Page

Members of Bakery Workers union struck Frito-Lay for three weeks in 2021 in Topeka, Kansas, over forced overtime, wages. Deepening capitalist crisis and boss attacks hit working people, families hard. Working-class fight for political power is road to women's emancipation.

ballots on the issue. A majority of 59% to 41% voted to reject the amendment, with both registered Democrats and Republicans voting no.

Before the vote, Lori Chrisman, a leader of the Value Them Both Coalition, which backed the amendment, admitted that if it was passed she would push for new laws to criminalize abortion from the moment of conception.

Working people in the state have faced attempts to prevent women's access to abortion in decades past. Hundreds of opponents of women's rights blockaded and temporarily shut down abortion clinics in Wichita in

1991. Abortion provider George Tiller was shot dead in his church there by a rightist in 2009.

The outcome of the referendum was unanticipated by both liberal and conservative commentators. Republicans were convinced that the amendment they backed in Kansas would carry the day. Liberals consider Kansas a "flyover" state populated by bigoted and backward "deplorable" workers who had voted by 56% for Donald Trump in 2020. Neither of the bosses' Democratic and Republican parties think working people are capable of acting to defend our own class interests.

Kansas law will now continue to allow abortions up to the 22nd week of pregnancy. The referendum shows that the Supreme Court's Dobbs ruling did what it said it would do — return decision-making on abortion, a question on which opinions remain deeply divided, to "the people and their elected representatives."

A broad social and economic crisis continues to bear down on working people and our families in that state and across the country, illustrating why we must use our unions to lead a fight for what we need — cost-of-living raises in all union contracts and social programs; affordable housing, child care and health care; access to adoption, and to family planning, including contraception and safe, secure abortions. Such a fight is the road to advancing the struggle for women's rights.

Cuba gets solidarity, help in battle against huge oil fire

BY SETH GALINSKY

Messages of support to the Cuban people and government keep arriving from around the world following a devastating fire that has destroyed four of the eight fuel tanks at the Matanzas Supertanker Base, the country's largest oil storage and distribution facility.

The fire began when lightning struck one of the tanks Aug. 5, causing it to catch on fire and then explode, despite the base's Storage Tank Lightning Protection System. While progress has been made, as of Aug. 10 the fire was still active, as crews take control of the area and take further steps to quell it.

A big challenge is the impact of the

more than 60-year U.S. economic war on the Cuban people, aimed at undermining Cuba's socialist revolution. With Washington blocking much of Cuba's trade and financial transactions, the revolutionary government did not have on hand the firefighting chemicals and equipment it needs. The loss of fuel consumed by the fire will exacerbate power outages Cuba is already forced to schedule due to the embargo. Just in 2019, U.S.-imposed sanctions blacklisted 27 shipping companies and 53 tankers because of oil deliveries to Cuba.

In response to an appeal for international solidarity by Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel, some 85 firefighters from Mexico and 35 from

Venezuela have joined with Cuban firefighters, soldiers, the Red Cross and other volunteers to fight the fire. The Venezuelan government also sent 20 tons of foam and other fire-suppressant chemicals and a high capacity pump to distribute them.

Both the Venezuelan and Mexican governments have received the solidarity of Cuban internationalist health care workers over the years.

The Cuban government thanked them and the governments of Russia, Nicaragua, Argentina and Chile, among others for their material aid. "We are also grateful for the offer of technical advice from the United States," said Díaz-Canel.

Central leaders of the Cuban government have been on the scene to help organize the effort to put out the fire. Local residents have opened their homes and shared their meals with the volunteers.

About 125 people have been injured so far. As of Aug. 9, 19 of those were still hospitalized. There is one dead and 14 people are missing. More than 600 people in Matanzas province have donated blood to help the injured.

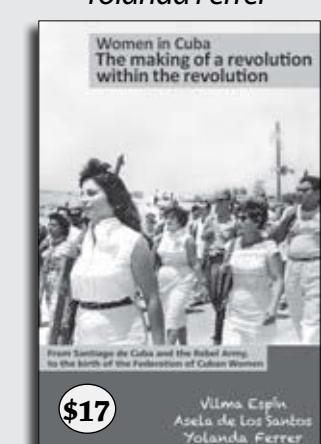
"We offer our solidarity to the people of Cuba, and to all those who have come to their aid," said Sara Lobman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from New York. "We call on working people everywhere to demand that Washington end its economic, financial and commercial sanctions on Cuba now!"



Osvaldo Gutiérrez Gómez
Cuban farmers bring donations of food to firefighters, volunteers battling huge explosion, blaze caused by lightning hitting Matanzas oil tanks, key to generation of power in Cuba, Aug. 5. Mexican, Venezuelan governments sent dozens of firefighters to join Cuban workers struggling to put fire out.

Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution

Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos,
Yolanda Ferrer



pathfinderpress.com

Defend Ukraine independence!

Continued from front page

Where Moscow's forces have occupied Ukrainian cities, like in Kherson, and suppressed protests against their rule, they now face both a counteroffensive from Kyiv and guerrilla attacks from Ukrainians living in those towns.

The Kremlin is being forced to shift forces from Donbas in the east to reinforce its occupation in the south as Kyiv's counteroffensive utilizes longer-range precision weapons.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky proposed Aug. 8 that western countries shut their borders to all Russian nationals, irrespective of their stance on Moscow's war. His proposal undercuts the building of solidarity that is needed between working people in Ukraine and Russia, to force Putin to end his war and withdraw Russian forces. Putin cynically utilizes such moves by the capitalist government in Kyiv to claim his regime is defending the Russian people against "Western aggression."

Imperialist world order shaken

The largest ground conflict in Europe since the Second World War continues to send shock waves throughout the imperialist world order.

Capitalist powers from Germany to Japan are rearming. Alignments are being shaken as each ruling class looks to advance its own interests in a more unstable and crisis-ridden world. In Europe rifts are widening among and within the major powers.

Moscow cut oil supplies through a pipeline that supplies the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia Aug. 4, aiming to sharpen rifts within the EU over sanctions. The Kremlin continues to squeeze capitalist governments in Europe by limiting gas supplies they depend on. Putin is banking on growing energy shortages to induce Washington and its allies to back off supporting Kyiv militarily and financially. The Kremlin hopes this will allow it to hold onto the territory it has seized, if not make deeper inroads.

A deal recently brokered by Turkish and U.N. officials with Moscow aims to free up over 20 million tons of Ukraine's agricultural exports held up by the Russian naval blockade in the Black Sea to alleviate worsening world food shortag-

es. Before the war Russia and Ukraine accounted for nearly a third of global wheat and barley exports.

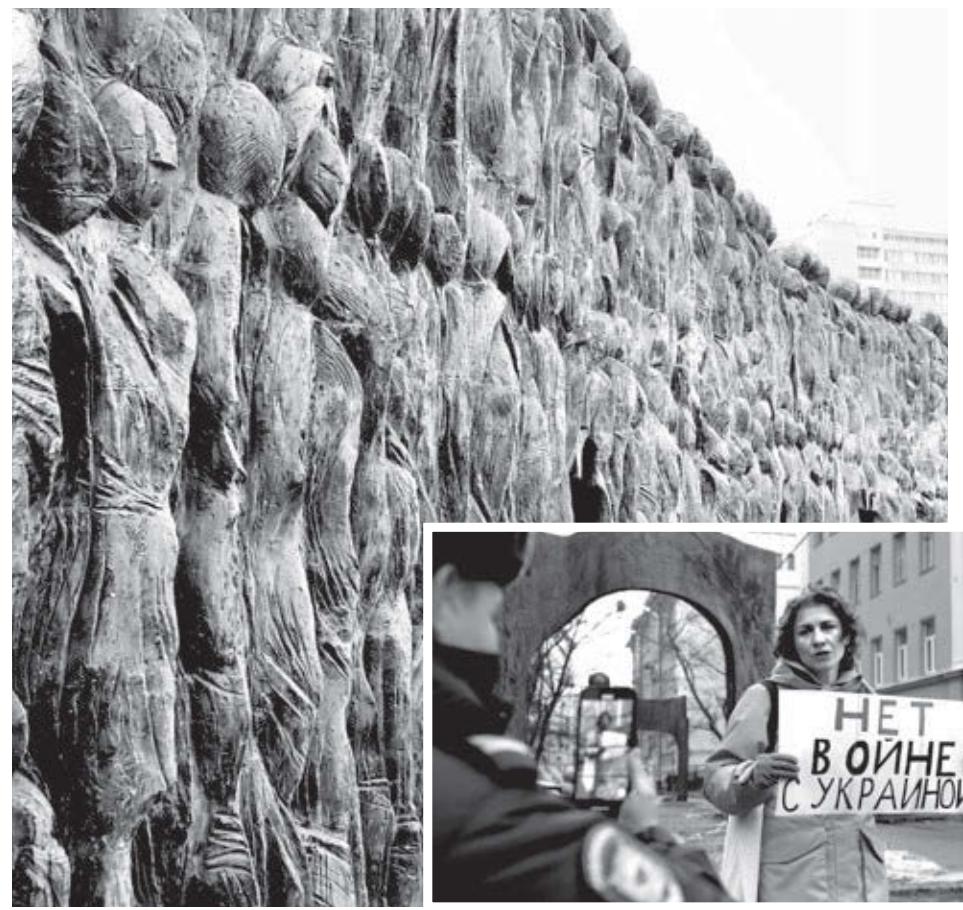
By Aug. 9, 12 cargo ships carrying a quarter-million tons of grain had sailed from Ukrainian Black Sea ports. These wartime exports won't reach the prewar level of 6 million tons a month any time soon.

Impact of war in Russia

Many among Moscow's numerically superior armed forces are demoralized. The Kremlin has made it a crime to question Putin's invasion. The number of war dead is a state secret to prevent mourning families and protesters from joining forces in opposition to the war. Public knowledge of casualties would impede Moscow's urgent recruitment effort to replace losses at the front. Estimates that 15,000 Russian troops have been killed since the invasion began would equal those in the decadelong Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which led to deep unrest at home.

Alexandra, from the Russian Baltic enclave of Kaliningrad, became a widow at 19 when her husband, Maksim, a marine, was killed in Ukraine. Her father, Sergei Dustin, posted comments online saying the Russian people needed to ask why their sons were dying. He called the war a "massacre started by crazy old men" incapable of "anything but destruction, threats against the world" and "endless lies."

Dmitry Shkrebet is the father of a



Wall of Sorrow, above, is Moscow monument unveiled in 2017 to remember victims of Stalinist terror. Action against Moscow's invasion of Ukraine there July 24, marking fifth month of war, was halted by arrests of protesters arriving with flowers, unfurling signs. Pro-regime provocateurs backed cops and taunted protesters. Inset, sign says, "No to war in Ukraine."

conscript sailor listed as "missing" after the Russian Black Sea flagship Moskva was sunk by Ukrainian missiles April 13. He accuses Russian authorities of covering up how many sailors died. Secret police grilled him and searched his house before the military finally issued a death certificate for his son Aug. 2.

"We will never be the same again," Shkrebet wrote. "We have become more unhappy, but also stronger, tough-

er. We no longer fear even those who should be feared."

Some Russian soldiers refusing to fight are being held in camps in Moscow-occupied areas of Ukraine, including at Popasna, Stakhanov and Krasnyi Luch. At Brianka, in the Donbas, relatives have set up a vigil to demand their sons' release outside a camp where 200 "refuseniks" are being held.

Workers in Russia protest to defend wages, conditions

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

According to government officials in Russia, there are practically no labor disputes or strikes there because amicable relations exist between workers, bosses and the government. But a closer look tells a very different story.

There were almost 400 labor protests in Russia last year despite repressive conditions imposed by the regime of President Vladimir Putin, writes Pyotr Biziukov for Monitoring of Worker Protests, a website compiling records of labor struggles for the past 15 years.

Laws making it almost impossible to go on strike were adopted shortly

after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1993. Official statistics show no more than five "legal" strikes a year for the past decade and a half. But workers in Russia have organized different types of actions, including pickets, rallies, hunger strikes, roadblocks and work-to-rule, known as an Italian strike.

Even though normally barred, strikes are permitted when workers are owed back wages. Between 1.7 million and 2 million people were not paid on time at least once every year, according to Biziukov. And this situation has gotten worse since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine and the imposition of sanctions against Russia by Washington and other imperialist powers.

After Putin's invasion and the government's crackdown on protests, strikes plummeted. But since then, the number has grown each month. In early June workers went on strike at the Ural Compressor Plant in Yekaterinburg because of non-payment of wages for April and May. More than 300 workers are owed some \$364,000.

In response, plant director Denis Tasakov blasted workers for their failure to "understand" what Putin calls Moscow's "special military operation" in Ukraine. Tasakov demanded strikers "come to their senses."

"No one cared about wages during the Great Patriotic War," he added, trying to compare the victorious defense of the Soviet Union from the invasion by Nazi Germany in World War II, with the Putin regime's cur-

rent attempt to crush Ukraine's hard-fought independence.

Many labor protests are by taxi drivers and construction and health workers. Some workers who file complaints with state authorities or express anti-government views on the internet also face harassment by authorities and criminal prosecution.

State forces raided the home and arrested Kirill Ukrantsev, president of the Russian Couriers Union, April 25. Charged with organizing unsanctioned protests, he was detained for two months and now faces a trial that could put him in prison for five years.

The raid occurred on the fourth day of a strike called by workers at Yandex Food. "Food delivery couriers had their wages cut recently, so we had to protest against this," the union said in a statement.

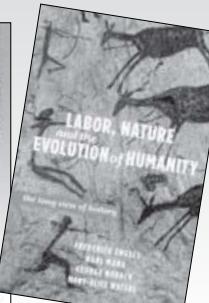
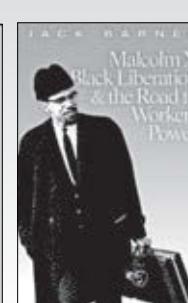
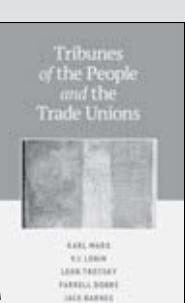
In September 2021 Ukrantsev was also detained for 10 days for demanding the release of Azat Miftakhov, an anarchist convicted and sentenced to six years in a penal colony for his involvement in an alleged attack on offices of Putin's United Russia party. Miftakhov denied the charges.

In 2019 Putin approved thought-control laws that allow courts to fine and incarcerate people for showing "disrespect" toward authorities, and to censor media for publishing what the government claims is "fake news."

The government also raised the retirement age from 60 to 65 for men, and from 55 to 63 for women in 2019. In response, thousands of working people took to the streets in several cities to protest these attacks on workers' rights.

BOOKS WORKERS NEED TODAY...

...ABOUT BUILDING THE ONLY KIND OF PARTY WORTHY OF THE NAME "REVOLUTIONARY"

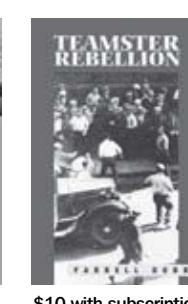
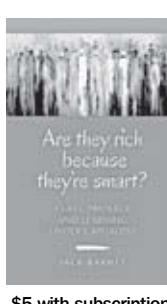
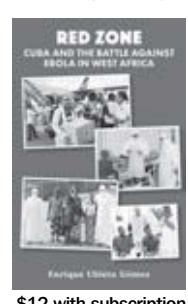


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Steps to strengthen the communist movement in the Pacific

BY MIKE TUCKER
AND LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY — In a major step forward the Communist Leagues in New Zealand and Australia have decided to combine their forces to build one Communist League, based in Australia with its headquarters in Sydney. The decision will enable the party to respond boldly to key developments in politics and working-class struggles not only in Australia and New Zealand but throughout the Pacific region.

The move will build on decades of work, working-class struggle experience, and close collaboration between the two Communist Leagues in Australia and New Zealand, a proud history strengthened by their collaboration with Communist Leagues in Canada and the United Kingdom and the Socialist Workers Party in the United States.

Two longtime Communist League leaders, Linda Harris in Australia and Mike Tucker in New Zealand, presented the decision at a Militant Labour Forum here July 23.

The event — which included not only CL members and supporters but a number of workmates — celebrated the opening of a new hall for the Communist League in the heart of working-class districts in southwestern Sydney. A meal and lively discussion set the tone for all. A similar meeting to celebrate the move will be held shortly in Auckland.

Chairing the meeting, Harris, organizer of the Communist League in Australia, said, “Combining our forces will enable us to reach out from here to campaign with our communist program and win a response among working people more broadly in Australia and the Pacific. It will strengthen our ability to engage in politics and class-struggle developments and to recruit fighters to our party.”

“Economic competition and conflicting capitalist interests are sharpening national tensions and class struggle in the Indo-Pacific region today,” explained Tucker, organizer of the Communist League in New Zealand. “Given Australia’s weight as an imperialist power right at the center of these shifts we decided that’s where we should regroup.”

Imperialist powers in the region, from Washington to London, Paris to Tokyo, are beefing up their military presence and forging new alliances in response to the rise of Beijing as the main economic, political and military rival to Washington in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. At the same time, all the major capitalist rivals are competing with each other for markets and influence.

“Our world, marked by violent contradictions, is in a deepening crisis of capitalist production and trade,” said Dave Prince, a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States. “That crisis is increasingly felt in Australia and throughout the region.” The historical decline of U.S. imperialism — for which there is no replacement — “will lead to a devastating world war unless capitalist rule is replaced by the working and exploited classes around the world.”

This regroupment of longtime fighters in the working class and social struggles in New Zealand and Aus-



Militant/Baskaran Appu

July 23 Sydney forum on move to regroup communist forces in Australia, the main South Pacific imperialist power. Speaking, Linda Harris, Communist League in Australia, between Steve Penner, Communist League, Canada, and Mike Tucker, Communist League, New Zealand.

tralia is “a bold move,” he said. It’s in harmony with the long history of large numbers of working people in the two countries moving back and forth as economic conditions and the class struggle allowed. It qualitatively strengthens the prospects for building the communist vanguard in the region. “We’re looking for new fighters who want to take this on,” Prince added.

“The mass rebellion that has been taking place in Sri Lanka shows how the class struggle can explode,” said Tucker. “What is key to advancing such battles is the forging of a party,

as the class struggle unfolds, that is guided by a communist program that draws on the lessons of 150 years of working-class struggles.”

“Today New Zealand’s rulers are hesitant to take steps that might jeopardize their long-standing trade relationship with China,” Tucker said. “Hence, successive New Zealand governments have proclaimed they are pursuing an ‘independent’ foreign policy. That’s a complete fantasy. New Zealand’s military remains totally dependent on Australia and the U.S.

“The forces that came together to

Beijing-Washington conflict heats up over Taiwan

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Chinese warships and warplanes launched live-fire “exercises” surrounding Taiwan the day after an Aug. 2-3 visit to the island by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the highest-ranking U.S. official to visit there in 25 years. Beijing says the island is part of Chinese territory and Pelosi’s visit was a provocation.

The U.S. rulers are looking for ways to assert their domination of the Pacific, which they consider their “prize” for coming out on top in the imperialist slaughter of the Second World War. Central to their aims is curbing mounting competition from Beijing and the growing reach and capabilities of the Chinese military. To that end Washington helped initiate a defense pact last year establishing closer military collaboration and technology sharing with the rulers of Australia and the U.K.

Pelosi’s visit, part of a five-nation tour in East Asia, highlighted divisions within the Democratic Party and among the U.S. rulers. President Joseph Biden initially tried to head off the visit. Pelosi, also a Democrat, went anyway, backed by many Republicans.

In Taiwan’s capital, Taipei, Pelosi declared, “America stands with Taiwan.”

As a condition in establishing relations with Beijing, Washington adopted a “One China” policy in 1979, but continued giving the Taiwanese rulers political and military backing, provided they made no formal declaration of independence.

U.S. officials claim Chinese President Xi Jinping has advanced his timetable for reunification of Taiwan into China from later this decade to

form the Communist Leagues in Australia and New Zealand in the 1980s have sought to collaborate to build parties in the two countries over many decades,” Tucker said.

Steve Penner, organizer of the Communist League in Canada, told the meeting that there is no political organization in the world, outside of the communist movement, “better able to explain what is driving Moscow’s war on Ukraine, how it has opened a new stage in the breaking apart of the imperialist ‘world order.’ No one else explains the stakes for working people internationally.

“The future that imperialism has in store for us is fascism and war driven by the very workings of capitalism itself. This can only be stopped by mass revolutionary struggles of the working class that culminate in taking power out of the hand of the capitalist rulers. The decision to consolidate our forces in the Pacific,” he said, “is an important step in building the kind of proletarian party rooted in the continuity of the international communist movement that is necessary to lead that fight.”

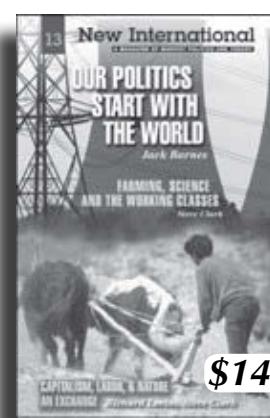
The decision will allow the Communist Leagues to build a party in Australia able to join in the discussions and struggles of working people on the biggest questions of national and world politics. Campaigning in the New South Wales state elections to be held next March 25, and pointing an independent working-class road forward will be one of the fruits of the merger.

southern Japanese island of Okinawa. The Japanese rulers are seeking to expand the size and use of their military.

Japan’s 50-year colonial rule of Taiwan was overturned in 1945. The island’s return to Chinese jurisdiction was widely welcomed by its people. In 1947 they rose in rebellion against the Kuomintang regime there that defended the class interests of the landlords and capitalists. The uprising was bloodily suppressed. After the victory of the 1949 Chinese Revolution, Kuomintang leader Chiang Kai-shek retreated to the island. A brutal U.S.-backed dictatorship was imposed for almost four decades.

Decades of rapid economic development created a weighty working class on the island of 23 million. While the big majority are ethnic Chinese, younger generations especially identify as Taiwanese. Many witnessed Beijing’s dismantling of political rights in nearby Hong Kong, and have no wish to come under its rule.

New International magazine #13 Our Politics Start With the World



“All the questions posed by the ongoing crises and breakdowns of international capitalism can only be understood clearly, and answered in practice, if we start from a world perspective. Only then can we begin acting to advance proletarian alternatives, as opposed to the eternally recurring lesser-evil choices which reinforce the current social relations of exploitation and oppression.”

— Jack Barnes

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Mass anti-Vietnam War protests changed face of US politics

One of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for August is Out Now! A Participant's Account of the Movement in the U.S. Against the Vietnam War by Fred Halstead. Representing the Socialist Workers Party, Halstead helped lead the international protest movement. The unwavering determination of the peoples of Indochina, the growing opposition of U.S. troops to the war, and anti-war protests from the early 1960s to mid-1970s that swelled to tens of millions across the world deeply affected the working class in the U.S. and forced Washington to pull its troops out of Vietnam. The excerpt below is from the "Afterword." Copyright © 1991 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Stuart Kiehl

United Auto Workers contingent in May 5, 1971, mass demonstration in New York. Many workers, then some unions, became involved in fight against Washington's war in Indochina.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FRED HALSTEAD

The Second Indochina War was the first in the epoch of American imperialism in which the United States went down to defeat. After emerging victorious from the Spanish-American War and two world wars, then encountering a stalemate in Korea, the Pentagon's military machine was ignominiously evicted from Vietnam, thanks to the persevering struggle of the Indochinese plus the antiwar resistance of the American people. This was the most sustained and, except for Russia in 1905 and 1917,

the most effective antiwar movement within any big power while the shooting was going on. . . .

U.S. intervention had a thoroughly imperialistic character. The colossus of world capitalism hurled its military might without provocation against a small and divided colonial nation thousands of miles away struggling for self-determination and unification. A series of American presidents sought to do what King George III's empire failed to do against the rebel patriots of 1776.

On one side was a state armed to the teeth promoting the strategic aims and material interests of the corporate rich on the global arena; on the other was a worker and peasant uprising heading toward the overthrow of capitalist power and property, despite the limited political program of its leadership. . . .

Apart from genocide against the Native Americans, which involved intermittent warfare over four centuries, this was the longest war in America's history. The first U.S. soldier was reported killed in Vietnam in 1959, the last in 1975, a span of sixteen years. (The Revolutionary War lasted eight years and the Spanish-American War only four months.)

According to the U.S. Department of Defense, the total number of American military personnel engaged at one time or another in the Southeast Asian war — including bases in Thailand and elsewhere and on ships at sea — was over

eight million. This was more than half the number of Americans engaged in World War II (8,744,000 compared with 16,112,566). Over three million Americans were sent to Vietnam itself. Sixty thousand were killed, 46,000 of these in combat; and 300,000 were wounded. . . .

The Indochinese were killed in the hundreds of thousands, possibly millions, and their lands devastated. The Pentagon dropped more bomb tonnage on the relatively small area of Indochina than had been dropped anywhere in the world in all previous wars combined.

The direct dollar cost to the U.S. in South Vietnam alone was \$141 billion. This was more than \$7,000 for each of the area's 20 million inhabitants, whose per capita income was only \$157 per year. . . . Economists correctly link the rapid inflation of the late 1960s to the large federal deficits resulting from U.S. spending for the Vietnam War.

Most Americans today regard this as a colossal waste of lives and wealth in a shameful war. But the Pentagon strategists make a different assessment. To be sure, they did not cover themselves with glory or succeed in crushing the Vietnamese revolution and retaining a staging area for U.S. operations in the region. But they did hold back the advancement of the colonial revolution in Vietnam for a decade and a half. That was part of their job of policing the world for American big business, its multinational companies, and its clients

in Japan and elsewhere. . . .

[T]he antiwar agitation and mass mobilizations spurred the radicalization of many sectors of the population. "It is no accident," wrote Susan Jacoby for one, "that so many female veterans of the civil-rights movement and the antiwar movement ultimately became involved in the women's liberation movement."

It changed the political face of the United States and motivated a healthy distrust of the rulers in Washington that bore fruit in the Watergate revelations and their sequels.

It broke the fever of the anticommunist hysteria and weakened the efficacy of the "red scares" that have been used as a weapon against any challenge to the status quo.

It challenged and changed the stereotyped image of GIs as obedient pawns of the brass immunized against dissenting currents within the civilian population.

The abhorrence of any further military ventures abroad has restricted the options available to Washington in its imperial designs, as its dilemma over Angola in 1976 indicated.

The American movement against the Vietnam War broke the pattern of large and successful movements for social reform in the United States confining themselves to domestic matters and accepting uncritically the imperialist foreign policy, aggressive wars, and counterrevolutionary ventures of the American Establishment.

All this cannot but be reflected in future struggles for social progress within the United States and internationally. It is even possible that the antiwar movement will prove to have been in a number of aspects a rehearsal for the coming American socialist revolution. . . .

The American movement against the Vietnam War knocked a gaping hole in the theory that because of its control over the military, the police, the economy, and the tremendously effective modern media, the ruling class could get away with anything so long as there was some degree of prosperity. The antiwar movement started with nothing but leaflets. But it proved that people can think for themselves if the issue touches them deeply enough, technology notwithstanding. In human affairs there is still nothing so powerful as an idea and a movement whose time has come.

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EDITORIAL

No to Democrats' assaults on constitutional rights!

The armed raid by the FBI, on the home of former President Donald Trump in Florida Aug. 8, deals blows to rights in the U.S. Constitution that provide vital protection against state interference in political and trade union activity. These are rights that working people have a deep interest in defending and fighting to extend.

Ordered by the administration of President Joseph Biden, the raids intensify the political crisis wracking the U.S. rulers and their twin Democratic and Republican parties. Democrats are stepping up their drive to prevent Trump, a capitalist electoral opponent they fear, from ever running again or to put him behind bars. The former president's rise to the White House reflected the anger of millions of working people attracted to a candidate who paraded himself as an alternative to parties that had treated them for decades with nothing but disdain.

The Florida raid is an unprecedented attack on the constitutional system on which the U.S. government is based, and on rights and protections working people have conquered and need. As are the raids ordered against Uhuru and the African People's Socialist Party on charges of being "agents" of Russia, as well as Sen. Marco Rubio's demands that the government target Puentes de Amor and its leader Carlos Lazo as "agents" of Cuba.

Decades of experience have taught class-conscious workers that whenever the government carries out extraordinary moves that target a rival capitalist politician, it means similar methods and more will be unleashed to harass, disrupt and set back union struggles, opponents of Washington's wars and working-class organizations like the Socialist Workers Party. The capitalist rulers' government and its political police, the FBI, exist to defend the profits and power of the propertied owners, who are intensifying their exploitation of working people as their system faces growing crisis and international rivalry.

In 1940 the Democratic Party administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt imposed the "thought-control" Smith Act and unleashed the FBI to silence militant workers and outlaw advocacy of communist ideas. Leaders of the SWP and class-struggle militants in the Teamsters union in Minneapolis were framed up and imprisoned for organizing opposition to Washington's goals in entering the second imperialist world war in search of markets and colonies. Federal agents carried out highly publicized raids, seizing records and literature from the offices of both the union and the party.

Roosevelt's assaults on constitutional rights were extended in the years after the war. The extent of government spying and disruption operations against the working-class movement was revealed during the SWP's successful lawsuit and political campaign, begun in 1973, against the FBI's COINTELPRO operations. That fight led to a court ruling that the use of cop informers to spy on political activity is a violation of the constitutionally protected right to free speech and political association, that the FBI's copious burglaries of SWP offices violate Fourth Amendment protections against "unreasonable searches and seizures," and that its disruption of party activity and the lives of party members is illegal.

That political campaign for constitutional protections and its outcome remain a weapon in the hands of working people.

Today's union struggles to push back boss assaults on living standards and working conditions show the growing willingness of workers to defend ourselves, our families and our unions.

This requires an uncompromising defense of constitutional rights. Defending these protections of free speech, political association, and protesting thuggish police raids — regardless of who the rulers target — is crucial to preparing for the working-class struggles and revolutionary battles in the years that lie ahead.

Central Park jogger case frame-up victim cleared

Continued from page 4

Edward Koch smeared them as "monsters." All five maintained their innocence. Authorities wanted "for us to be lynched," Salaam said later.

Their testimony "differed from one another on the specific details of virtually every major aspect of the crime," Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau later admitted. There was no physical evidence or witnesses, the crime timeline never matched their location and Meili said she did not remember details of the attack.

In 2002, their indictments were dismissed after

Matias Reyes, already serving time for another rape and murder, admitted he alone raped Meili. DNA found on Meili matched Reyes.

After more than 11 years, the Central Park Five were awarded \$41 million in a 2014 lawsuit that they filed in 2003 against New York City and the cops and prosecutors who had framed them. The city denied any wrongdoing. "No amount of money could have given us our time back," Salaam told CBS, "and that time is really what's important."

Lopez received no compensation for his frame-up and incarceration.

LETTERS

Delight with your article

I want to express my sincere gratitude and delight at reading the excellently written Aug. 8 *Militant* article entitled "National Federation of Blind traces its aims, history, fight for rights." Jane Roland and others captured the substance and spirit of the convention held July 5-10 in New Orleans and the movement it represents.

Just as on picket lines, at union strike actions, and on the doorsteps of working people around the world, the volunteers who staffed the Pathfinder table did not merely participate as vendors but fully as participants in the entire event, which was noted by visitors to the table and in discussions with these worker-correspondents. The people's movement of the blind is a microcosm of our society, and in

its majority comprises workers from every demographic.

The article also accurately reflected the tremendous work of the volunteers dedicated to making Pathfinder books and materials more widely available and accessible to those of us who are blind or print disabled. This will certainly enrich the discussion and involve more of us in the growing struggle of our class against the wholesale assault by

the capitalists on our living and working conditions and upon our very lives and those of our families.

*Maurice Peret
Baltimore, Maryland*

Delighted II

I just wanted to reach out and say what a wonderful article!! You described the mission of NFB perfectly! It is great to have the [Pathfinder] website to browse through as well! Thank you again!!

*Brooke Coelho
by email*

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund
The fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. Send a check or money order payable to the 'Militant' and earmarked "Prisoners' Fund" to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Or donate online at www.themilitant.com

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

'Militant' prison ban

Continued from front page

overturned after the *Militant*'s attorney, David Goldstein, filed an appeal.

The warden in Phoenix gave no reason for banning issues no. 23 and no. 25, other than the false claim that the paper contains "political extremism and is detrimental to the security, good order, or discipline of the institution." The rejection notice only lists issue no. 23, but no. 25 was returned in the same envelope.

The notice is in violation of the U.S. Bureau of Prisons' own regulations, which state that a rejection notice "must contain reference to the specific article(s) or material(s) considered objectionable." Not a single article or sentence from the banned issue is cited.

The bureau's rules explicitly say that a warden "may not reject a publication solely" because its political content is "unpopular or repugnant" in the eyes of prison officials.

Goldstein has served notice on federal prison authorities that the paper is filing an appeal of the ban, seeking its reversal.

"Prisoners have a right to read the *Militant*'s reports of current events and topics of global significance," states a letter from Anthony Johnson for PEN America, an organization of writers that defends the right to freedom of expression. "The rejection of *Militant* issues no. 23 and no. 25 serve as an unwarranted restriction of the rights of both the intended reader and the publisher."

The front page of issue no. 23 includes a feature article opposing Moscow's invasion of Ukraine and another titled "Gun violence, crime are result of today's crisis of capitalism," a topic on the front page of hundreds of papers across the country. Inside is a feature explaining the importance of working people opposing antisemitism. There is also coverage of an ongoing strike by members of the United Mine Workers in Alabama, who have been walking the picket line at Warrior Met Coal for 16 months, and other labor battles.

Issue no. 25 covers similar topics, including articles on the rail workers' fight for safety and higher pay; defense of women's rights; a U.N. hearing on the fight of Puerto Rico for independence; and an article on the deepening capitalist economic crisis.

"There is a reason why the warden doesn't cite a single sentence in the *Militant* that could be considered 'objectionable,'" *Militant* editor John Studer said Aug. 8. "That's because nothing in the paper can justify banning it. Neither the warden nor any other prison official has the right to ban the *Militant* because they disagree with its point of view."

"Working people behind bars have the constitutional right to read about the war in Ukraine, to consider different views on where crime comes from, to be part of the world, to form their own opinions," Studer added.

He pointed out that the ban is not just an attack on the *Militant*. If it's allowed to stand it will be used to go after other publications, not just in federal prison, but in state and local jails across the country.

Join the fight to defend the right of prisoners to read material of their own choosing and the right of newspapers to have subscribers behind bars. Get your union and co-workers to send letters or petitions calling for the ban to be reversed. Get your local community group, prominent individuals and others to do the same. Get the word out as broadly as possible. For more information see box below.

Join fight to end Militant prison ban!

Get out the word. Distribute copies of *Militant* articles on this fight.

Get statements of support for the *Militant*'s appeal from unions, co-workers and other defenders of constitutional rights. Send to: Melissa Rios, Western Regional Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons, 7338 Shoreline Dr., Stockton, CA 95219, or via email to WXRO-ExecAssistant@bop.gov copies to themilitant@mac.com

Contribute to fight to overturn the ban. Send check to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018, earmarked "Prisoners Rights Fight."